Some REASONS of a MEMBER of the Committee, &c. of the TRUSTEES of the INFIRMARY in *James Street Weſtminſter*, near St. *James*'s *Park*, for his dividing againſt the Admiſſion of VENEREAL PATIENTS.

In a Letter to a LADY.

MADAM,

MY private Affairs calling me ſuddenly into the Country, I could not acquit myſelf of the Promiſe I made you of waiting on you to inform you of the Reſolutions that were paſſed by the Committee appointed the 7th of *November* laſt, by the General Board of the Truſtees of the Infirmary in *James Street Weſtminſter*, to conſider, *What Patients are properly the Objects of this Charity, and to enquire into the Methods hitherto followed both amongſt us, and at other Hoſpitals, in the Choice of Patients to be admitted, and to draw up a Report of what Methods ſhall appear to them the moſt ſatisfactory to the Subſcribers, moſt for the Good and Safety of the Patients, and moſt for the Peace and Proſperity of the Society.*

Which Report they are deſired to lay before the next General Board.

The Committee, as appointed, met at the *Infirmary*, on *Friday* the 7th of *November*, and as the Queſtion, *viz. What Patients are properly the Objects of this Charity*, would take up too much Time to deſcribe and enumerate the ſeveral Diſeaſes, &c. that entitled a Patient to this Charity, the Committee thought it would anſwer the Deſign of the General Board as well, if a little Variation of it was admitted, and the Queſtion was made, *Whether Venereal Patients ſhall be admitted.* Which Queſtion was accordingly put; and it paſſed in the Negative.

Another Queſtion being put, *viz.*

Whether they ſhall be rejected; It paſſed in the Affirmative.

On the firſt of *December*, there was another Meeting of the ſaid Committee, at the *Infirmary*, when the Queſtion being put, *That it may be reſolved, That if any Perſons having the Venereal Diſeaſe, and not diſcovering the ſame, ſhall obtain Admittance under Pretence of ſome other Diſtemper, they ſhall upon Diſcovery afterwards made thereof, be immediately diſcharged without Cure*;

It paſſed in the Affirmative.

And as to that Part of the Order of the General Board, which directed an *Enquiry to be made into the Methods hitherto followed both amongſt us, and other Hoſpitals in the Choice of Patients to be admitted,*

The Books of the *Infirmary* were carefully ſearched from the firſt Foundation of it, which was in the Year 1719, to the 1ſt of this Month *December*, and there was found only one ſingle Inſtance of a VenerealPerſon being admitted a Patient on the 25th of *October* laſt, *viz. James Slightholme.*

I believe, MADAM, by this time, you are deſirous to know, on which Side of the Queſtion I voted, and, as uſual, I muſt give you my Reaſons for ſo doing.

I being

I being an original Subſcriber to the *Infirmary*, and well acquainted with the Deſigns and Intentions of thoſe worthy Gentlemen, who firſt ſet this good and neceſſary Charity on foot, do aſſure you, that they had only in their View the Relief of the Induſtrious, Laborious Sick and Needy.

Therefore when the firſt Queſtion was put, *viz.*

Whether the Venereal Patients ſhall be admitted;

I gave my Negative to it.

And to the ſecond Queſtion then put, *viz.*

Whether they ſhall be rejected;

I gave my Affirmative.

And had the Pleaſure in both the Queſtions to be on the Side of the Majority.

I. Becauſe the original Intention of the Charity was for the Benefit of Induſtrious, Laborious Sick and Needy People.

II. Becauſe the Society have conſtantly rejected Venereal Patients, for the very Reaſon of being Venereal, from their firſt Inſtitution in the Year 1719 to the 25th of *October* 1738, when Admiſſion for one ſuch Patient, *viz. James Slightholme* was indeed obtained.

At a ſecond Meeting of the Committee, on the firſt of *December*, it was reſolved, *That if any Perſons having the Venereal Diſeaſe, and not diſcovering the ſame, ſhall obtain Admittance under Pretence of ſome other Diſtemper, they ſhall upon Diſcovery afterwards made thereof, be immediately diſcharged without Cure.*

This muſt certainly be reckoned a very prudent Reſolution; becauſe the Admiſſion of Venereal Patients, repreſented as having other Diſtempers, brings an Excluſion to thoſe Objects for whom the Charity has always been intended, and has therefore juſtly given great Diſcontent to the Truſtees. And which muſt unavoidably be the Caſe, when Venereals are admitted. For the Truth is, the *Infirmary* being too ſmall for the Numbers of the Miſerable Laborious Poor, that apply, or are recommended to this Charity for Relief, many of them being ſent away for want of Room, ſome very probably periſh.

The Society have two little Houſes adjoining to the *Infirmary*, the firſt Floors of which are taken up by the Surgery, the Apothecary's Shop, the Waiting Room for the Out-Patients, and the Porter's Room. And above Stairs, are the Apothecary's Lodging Room, and his Store Room, and alſo a Room for the Cloaths of the Poor, who are ſtript upon Admiſſion and cloathed with the Cloathing of the *Infirmary*. And as to the remaining Rooms of thoſe Houſes, which ſome propoſe to have perpetuated to the Service of Venereals, they are intended for Caſes of Accidents and Exigence, ſuch as the ſeveral Fractures which often happen among the Labouring Poor, and which generally require Quiet; as alſo for thoſe Poor diſeaſed, who after Admiſſion into the Wards, ſhall be ſeized with any infectious Diſtemper, as the *Small Pox*, or for the *Itch*, which will often appear upon the going off of another Diſtemper, as a *Fever*, *&c.* and likewiſe for ſuch as by ſome ill Smell, may be offenſive in the Wards.

And as the Admiſſion of Venereals is not only contrary to the original Intention and conſtant Cuſtom of the Society; ſo the Admiſſion of them without Expence, like the other diſeaſed, is abſolutely oppoſite to all Example whatever. For at St. *Bartholomew*'s, St. *Thomas*'s, and *Guy*'s Hoſpitals, all of which have large Funds and great Conveniencies

for

for that Purpoſe, a Conſideration is required for the Poxed, which is not required for the clean Patients, as may be ſeen among the Orders made by the Governors of the ſeveral Hoſpitals. A Copy of ſome of thoſe Orders I lay before you.

Orders of St. BARTHOLOMEW'S *Hoſpital.*

" *Ordered*, That all Patients, that have the *French Pox*, and do not " diſcover the ſame at their Admittance into this Hoſpital, and obtain Ad- " mittance under Pretence of ſome other Diſtemper ſhall forthwith be diſ- " charged, and not ſent to the Out-Hoſpital. *June* 6. 1687.

" This Court doth think fit, and are of Opinion, that there ſhould " be no more than twenty Patients at any one Time admitted into each " of the Out-Houſes *(viz.)* the *Lock* and *King ſland*, and that the Church- " wardens that recommend the ſaid Patients, or their Friends, for the " Time to come, ſhould, before their Admittance into either of the ſaid " Places, become bound to pay four pence *per diem* for each Patient's " Diet, during his, her, or their Continuance in thoſe Houſes, they being " admitted only for Cure of their reſpective Infirmities. *Sept.* 24. 1696.

At St. THOMAS'S *Hoſpital.*

" It is ordered, that if hereafter, any happen to be admitted into this " Houſe, who have the foul Diſeaſe, they ſhall not go into any of the " clean Wards, nor come into the Officers Houſes, nor within the Chappel, " nor ſit upon the Seats, nor walk about in the Court Yards, upon Pain of " Expulſion. And if any Patient, having the foul Diſeaſe, ſhall refuſe or " neglect to diſcover the ſame, at the Time of taking in, and ſhall be " placed in a clean Ward, every ſuch Patient, when diſcovered, ſhall im- " mediately be diſcharged the Houſe without Cure.

At the Admiſſion of a foul Patient the Charge is 10*s.* 9*d.*

And much the ſame Rules and Orders are obſerved at *Guy*'s Hoſpital; and as to the Hoſpital near *Hyde Park*, which is ſupported by voluntary Contributions and Subſcriptions during Pleaſure, like the *Infirmary*, the Governors there have made a ſtrong Order, prohibiting the Admiſſion of all Venereals.

From theſe Facts, MADAM, it is to be hoped that the Gentlemen, who have been ſo good as to engage in a Truſt for thoſe of their poor diſtreſſed Fellow Creatures who perhaps can have no other Recourſe but to this Charity for Relief; will at their General Board agree with the Reſolutions of their Committee, *viz. That Venereal Patients ſhall not be admitted*; eſpecially if they conſider that the Admiſſion of Venereal Patients into the *Infirmary* may be thought a Subverſion of the Charity, or a Miſapplication of the Money given in truſt for the Poor.

I am, MADAM, *&c.*

Decemb. 7, 1738.

To
Sir Hans Sloane at His House
near Bloomsbury Square

Gazaway